

A LOW INCOME
HOUSING POLICY
FOR 1971.

**housing for
transients**

A LOW INCOME HOUSING POLICY FOR 1971
BACKGROUND PAPER

HOUSING FOR TRANSIENTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

The category of transients is frequently used to include transient youth, migrant workers, unattached individuals in the city and any other group that can be described as not having a permanent residence. However, for the purposes of policy formulation, it is important to keep these groups analytically distinct. At a conceptual level, the varying life styles, needs and preferences of these groups mean that no single policy or program can be effective and appropriate for all of these groups. This paper will consider only the problem of housing for transient youth.

Of all those considered transient, the youth sector is at present, the most prominent. In addition, since there are fewer means of providing accommodation for transient youth, this policy area should perhaps be given immediate attention. While the housing stock for migrant workers and urban transients is inadequate, the supply may be improved through existing programs like Section 16.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In order to formulate an effective policy or program to provide accommodation for transient youth, several basic concepts must be established. The most obvious is a definition of transient youth; another is the concept of transiency. Information is needed about the best locations for housing for transients and about the accommodation needs and preferences of this group.

The most serious obstacle to any attempt to formulate policy concerning accommodation for transient youth is the lack of knowledge about the transient youth phenomenon. Although the numbers of young people on the road have increased dramatically in the past five years, relatively little

is known about their life style, their problems and their needs. Some research has been undertaken; the Canadian Welfare Council has just published a report based on an inquiry into youth activity during the summer of 1969. National Health and Welfare is presently conducting a study of transient youth. The Department of the Secretary of State established a Committee on youth which recently presented its report.

Despite the lack of available research, some general statements can be made about transient youth. The basic age range is 13 to 23. The group has three main components:

- A. those travelling for the summer; many of these individuals could not get summer jobs and decided to spend three or four months seeing the country.
- B. those travelling for an extended period of time; some of them are wandering for lack of any alternative and others have simply decided that they want to travel for a year or two.
- C. those in the inner core of a metropolitan area; most of those kids have immigrated into the inner city and are relatively permanent visitors. Most of them are unemployed in the conventional sense and usually just drift around doing their thing in a big city.

The vast majority of transient youth have severely limited resources. Although some can afford to meet their needs through conventional channels like the YM-YWCA, many do not have the money for adequate food or shelter. Much of the increase in the numbers of youth travelling has been among those who are going from one urban centre to another, rather than among those spending most of their time in rural areas and provincial parks.

III. THE BROADER CONTEXT

Although some conclusion about the provision of accommodation for transients youth can be drawn from general statements about their physical needs, it is necessary to consider the control of the new culture among youth to understand their demand and preferences. The basic premise of the cultural patterns among many of the transient youth is a distaste for contemporary advanced industrial society. This distaste is manifested by specific challenges to the middle class value system that is a major factor in maintaining society in its present form. Long hair, unconventional clothes and new standards of sexual behaviour are all in obvious opposition to middle class values. The ethical system of the middle class is challenged by the attitude that work is boring and unfulfilling; transient youth's ability to 'crash' anywhere and their willingness to take free meals or to scrounge for them, pose an obvious threat to the societal insistence that you pay your own way and avoid free-loading at all costs.

The anti-materialist attitude of many of the transient youth is incomprehensible to many people. And the most contentious issue, that of drugs, serves only to increase the friction between transient youth (and others) and those who subscribe to the middle class value system; drugs, in that value system, are a contrived, artificial escape from the responsibilities of life as defined by the Protestant ethic.

The significance of the culture that rejects the industrial middle class and its values is that the preferences of those participating in the culture cannot be fulfilled through middle class means. To build hostels in suburbia would cause obvious difficulties; equally problematic are rules about the sexual segregation of hostels. If anything is to be done to provide

accommodation for transient youth, the most practical plan may be to provide it the way transient youth want it; otherwise, they may simply ignore it and will continue to sleep on park benches and to be arrested for vagrancy.

It is important that the federal government develops programs to provide assistance for transient youth. Because of the lack of resources among transient youth, their standard of living is frequently below that which is required to maintain physical health. There is a wide spectrum of behaviour problems among transients youth: neurotics and pre-psychotics, run-aways, drug pushers, kids strung out on drugs and so on. The municipalities are limited in their abilities to provide aid to transient youth. Municipal welfare expenditures in some centres have increased substantially as a result of the influx of transient youth. There is much community resentment of transient youth because of their failure to conform to moral and ethical standards and because they represent a drain on municipal resources and need public assistance. The resentment is heightened because those individuals are not from that city; the community attitude that 'those freaks should go back where they came from and stay there' is a very common one. Transient youth are frequently in trouble with the police on charges of vagrancy, loitering, possession or trafficking of drugs, hitch-hiking and many others. Frequently the attitude of the police is a reflection of the community resentment. The problem is only exacerbated when the travelling youth are the victims of discrimination.

IV. DEVELOPMENTS UP TO 1970

A logical first step in the development of a policy to provide accommodation for transient youth is to examine how conventional hostel accommodation has been provided, and to investigate recent programs that have attempted to provide assistance to travelling youth.

A. CANADIAN YOUTH HOSTEL ASSOCIATION

The Canadian Youth Hostel Association was incorporated in 1938 as a non-profit, recreational and charitable organization. Its purpose is to promote, establish and maintain a network of youth hostels in Canada; the hostels were designed to provide simple, overnight accommodation for young people to enable them to travel. The average age of active participants in the hostel program is 21. There are 43 hostels in Canada and all of them with the exception of one in Montreal are in rural areas (See Appendix A). The average number of beds per hostel is 23.

All of the hostels conform to CYHA minimum accommodation regulations. There are separate dormitories for male and females, a kitchen where the hostellers can prepare meals and a common room, in each hostel.

The Canadian Youth Hostel Association owns approximately one-third of the hostels itself, and the rest are owned by national parks, municipalities, organizations or private individuals. When CYHA does not own the hostel, it enters into an agreement with the owner to ensure that the owner adheres to the association's regulations; in return the hostel goes into the CYHA accredited listing.

No Federal grants are given to Canadian hostels, and provincial support is minimal. Financing for youth hostels and the maintenance of the CYHA program is derived from membership fees, program fees, overnight fees collected at the hostels and voluntary donations. The lack of adequate funds has severely curtailed the provision of hostel accommodation.

B. HOSTELS IN OTHER COUNTRIES

In other countries, hostel accommodation is provided in existing and new buildings. Some existing buildings like schools are used on a temporary basis; others rehabilitated and adopted for hostel use. (See Appendices B,

B. Continued

C and D).

In Sweden, Denmark and Japan, the youth hostel association signs a contract with the private individual, organization or municipality which is going to provide and operate the hostel; through this contract the hostel gets association accreditation. In Belgium, a hostel is constructed by an outside organization and then turned over to the hostel association for a nominal rental fee. Some hostel associations simply rent buildings for the summer. There are also dual-purpose buildings in which hostel and non-hostel functions are combined.

In some countries, there is substantial government support of hostels. In Germany, for example, one-third of the capital cost is borne by the federal government, one-third by the state government and the final one-third is shared by the municipality and the hostel association. In Japan, the Ministry of Transportation provide a subsidy of 90% of the cost per bed to a local authority building a hostel. The British Ministry of Education provides 50% of approved capital expenditure subject to an annual ceiling. In Austria, the capital costs are shared by five government departments. In Norway, the government gives a grant equal to 15% of capital cost and makes a loan for an additional 80%.

C. RECENT ACTIVITY IN CANADA

The Canadian Welfare Council initiated a study of transient youth in the spring of 1969. The project was carried on from mid-June to mid-September 1969; CWC researches visited eleven cities and carried out interviews in five of the cities. The purposes of the inquiry were to provide a profile of youth who are itinerants and to assess the patterns of community response to the phenomenon of transient youth. The project workers found that

C. Continued

most discussions of transient youth led directly into discussion of youth in general and from that point onward to the broad issues that are affecting public attitudes to youth and the attitudes of youth to society.

The results of the CWC inquiry were published in the spring of 1970; the report made the following recommendations:

"Youth hostels should be available across Canada at a minimal cost to users. Hostels should have public subsidies channelled through voluntary or public bodies that are prepared to assume responsibility for their operation.

We question the wisdom of developing extensive crash pad programs in private homes especially in the anonymity of the large cities where it is more difficult to protect both host and travellers.

Similarly, we question the need for establishing new agencies to administer the hostels especially as we believe that young people on the road are indifferent to the auspices if the management is satisfactory. We would urge however, that it is desirable for youth services to be youth operated.

We believe that federal funds are the appropriate source of subsidization. This is a movement across Canada. In summer 1969 in the Calgary Youth Aid Centre 17 per cent of the girls and 83 per cent of the boys were from outside Alberta. In Halifax 52 per cent came from Quebec, Ontario and the West. In

C. Continued

Toronto in Project '69, 24 per cent were from Ontario. Clearly provincial boundaries are wiped out in this movement and financing of the facilities should be similarly nation-wide. After all, the Fathers of Confederation were men of the railway age with not the faintest precognition of the highways and airways of today".

The remainder of the CWC recommendations are contained in Appendix E.

The Canadian Welfare Council sponsored a conference in April, 1970 in St. Adele, Quebec to discuss its study. One of the results of this conference was the decision by the Department of National Health and Welfare to conduct a study on transient youth. National Health and Welfare, using money from the Manpower student summer employment program, hired eight students to conduct studies on transient youth in eight Canadian cities. This research program was called the National Hostel Task Force; the purpose of the studies was to interview youth and ascertain their needs and problems, to evaluate relevant agencies concerned with youth and to identify special problem areas. The results of those studies are now being compiled into a major study by National Health and Welfare.

The Department of National Health and Welfare has been active in the youth field under its demonstration grant program as well. Several projects have been selected as Innovative Models for the area of youth and have been funded under the grant program. The Cool-Aid program in Vancouver and the Trailer project in Toronto were given financial assistance under the demonstration grant program.

In the fall of 1969, the Secretary of State established the Committee on Youth to investigate various aspects of the youth problem. The Committee on Youth, in the course of

C. Continued

its research, realised that the number of young people travelling in Canada during the summer of 1970 would be larger than ever before; the Committee convinced the Secretary of State that some provision must be made for housing for the transient youth. As a result the Secretary of State, in cooperation with the Department of National Defence, established the armouries program.

In thirteen Canadian cities, armouries were used as hostels during the summer months; those hostels were administered through the local contacts of the Committee on Youth. During July and August, the armouries program provided accommodation for 75,000 people.

The program was financed by a \$200,000 grant from the Manpower summer employment allocation. Each armoury submitted a budget; it is estimated that the cost of operating a hostel for 100 persons for two months is \$10,000.

The response of travelling youth to the armouries was very good. However, the response of some municipal officials can hardly be described as favourable. Mayor Tom Campbell of Vancouver threatened to have the water, sewage and light connections to the armoury cut off. And in Revelstoke, the municipal fire department apparently threw a fire bomb at the armoury; fortunately, it did not go off.

The activities of the Departments of National Health and Welfare and Secretary of State have been confined to specific projects. The only on-going federal program for the provision of hostels operates under the Canada Assistance Plan. Under this act, the federal government supplies 50% of the cost of providing services to the needy; the provinces contribute the other 50%, and the services are provided by various non-governmental institutions and organizations. One of the services made possible by the Canada Assistance Plan is the provision of hostel accommodation for indigent males. While

C. Continued

this is not designed specifically for youth, those hostel beds are available to young transient males.

In the fall of 1970, a National Conference on Youth and Travel was held in Ottawa. The conference was not particularly useful; much of the conference time was devoted to factional battle. The basic split was between the youth organizations providing for middle class youth to do a conventional hostel tour of the country and the representatives of the youth counter-culture which constitutes most of the increase in the numbers of the young on the road. However, the conference did make some resolutions concerning accommodation:

- (1) that the Canadian Youth Hostel Association improve its operation by removing the membership fee and by eliminating many of the rules and regulations.
- (2) that youth-operated hostels be developed; those will be open to all ages and will provide dormitory accommodation for couples, counseling services, health services and legal aid.
- (3) that a national system of hostels be developed under the sponsorship of the Travel and Exchange Department of Secretary of State.
- (4) that any federal financial aid be kept low enough so that federal control of hostels is not warranted.

D. CMHC ACTIVITY ON TRANSIENT HOUSING

There have been no CMHC loans advanced for transient housing. The interpretation of the NHA on the part of CMHC officials has been that lending activity under Section 16 must be for longer term shelter accommodation that is implied by transient accommodation.

D. Continued

The type of lending activity that most closely approaches the funding transient housing is to YM-YWCA's. However, loans have been advanced only for that portion of the accommodation which is not overnight accommodation. A three month period was defined as minimal time stay for YM-YWCA funding. Since 1966, seven projects were funded providing accommodation for 806 individuals. (See Appendix F).

During the past 5 years, proposals have been submitted for Section 16 funding for half-way housing; accommodation for drug addicts, alcoholics, delinquents, prisoners on parole, unwed mothers.

Since this form of housing is of a rehabilitative nature, the three month criteria seemed rather too stringent. It was decided that for this type of housing the regulations should become more flexible. Consequently half-way houses are funded with no limitations on minimal length of stay. Since 1966, ten projects for half-way houses have been funded under Section 16 and 16A, providing accommodation for 82 individuals. (See Appendix H).

E. COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE TO TRANSIENT YOUTH

In many cities across Canada, the community has provided some form of hostel accommodation for transient youth during the summer. In some centres, conventional programs like the YM-YWCA program were adapted to meet the needs of transient youth.

In Vancouver, Victoria, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, St. Catherines, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax, specific programs were developed to provide accommodation for youth travelling through the city.

Most of these programs were the result of action by groups of citizens or by church groups. In some cities, cooperative hostels were formed. In most of the cities,

YOUTH HOSTELS IN CANADA



APPENDIX B

	1967		1968		1969	
	Hostels	Beds	Hostels	Beds	Hostels	Beds
EUROPE	3,068	210,067	3,104	208,210	3,147	217,635
of which Germany	654	76,840	659	76,814	644	76,615
MEDITERRANEAN (outside Europe)	85	6,650	88	7,099	89	7,209
ASIA	713	40,831	751	43,287	753	43,957
of which Japan	520	36,576	554	38,996	567	39,813
AUSTRALASIA	111	1,833	113	1,856	110	1,851
AMERICAN (N.&S.)	152	4,553	145	3,975	136	4,595
AFRICA (Kenya)	5	138	6	142	6	107
WORLD TOTALS	4,134	264,072	4,207	264,569	4,241	275,354

APPENDIX C

COUNTRY	PROPORTION OF TOTAL OVERNIGHTS RECORDED BY FOREIGN VISITORS	PROPORTION OF TOTAL OVERNIGHTS RECORDED IN FIVE LARGEST HOSTELS	PROPORTION OF OVERNIGHTS RECORDED BY GROUPS AND SCHOOLS
AUSTRALIA	20%	26%	-
BELGIUM (FRANCE)	75%	65%	-
BULGARIA	-	-	85%
DENMARK	42%	30%	54%
GERMANY	10%	5%	85%
IRELAND (Eire)	70.7%	37%	-
IRELAND (Northern)	52%	66%	-
ISRAEL	23.7%	37%	45%
NETHERLANDS	38%	40%	54.9%
POLAND	1.6%	-	75%
SWEDEN	28.8%	18%	17%

	BEDS	OVERNIGHTS	OVERNIGHTS PER BED
MUNICH	600	115,900	193
FRANKFURT	560	106,111	189
BERLIN (youth guest house)	435	97,381	224
BERCHTESGADEN	500	71,041	142
HEIDELBERG	493	61,222	124

APPENDIX D

HOW THE HOSTELS WERE USED

	OVERNIGHTS RECORDED IN:			
	1966	1967	1968	1969
EUROPE	15,182,993	15,371,728	16,241,572	17,206,066
of which Germany	7,367,398	7,428,848	8,225,782	8,586,622
MEDITERRANEAN (outside Europe)	523,124	490,459	538,590	550,118
ASIA	2,454,544	2,626,824	2,820,176	2,935,609
of which Japan	2,354,633	2,520,692	2,709,263	2,828,839
AUSTRALASIA	90,436	95,581	84,384	96,314
AMERICA	69,981	80,561	74,576	85,099
AFRICA (Kenya)	6,051	6,051	2,364	4,239
WORLD TOTALS	18,327,129	18,671,204	19,761,662	20,877,445

APPENDIX E.

RECOMMENDATION OF CANADIAN COUNCIL ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
STUDY ON TRANSIENT YOUTH

The recommendations which follow are based both on the views of persons interviewed in the course of this inquiry who work with young people and on information drawn from interviews with transient youth.

Recommendations for the Benefit of All Youth

Although the terms of reference of the study limited the inquiry to transient youth, we heard many opinions on the need for changes which we believe would be of benefit to all young people. The following recommendations reflect these views as well as the concern expressed for measures of a preventive nature.

1. The federal government should give priority to the formation of a national youth policy.
2. Consideration should be given to the creation of a national youth bureau to integrate the various national programs concerned with youth. The federal government should initiate and support a continuing program of research as a basis for policy planning in the youth field.
3. Comprehensive planning involving much closer cooperation among education, recreation, health, welfare, law enforcement and church organizations is urgently required at the local, provincial and federal level. Young people themselves must have a substantial role in this planning.
4. A guiding consideration in the framing of policies and programs should be to maximize opportunities and the capacity for self-direction on the part of young people. Immediate attention should be given to lowering the minimum age for voting in federal, provincial and municipal elections as well as for assuming other rights and responsibilities associated with adulthood.
5. The provinces are urged to adopt a uniform legal age for juveniles.
6. School systems should press on with the kinds of reorganization which will make education more relevant to society as it is today and as it is apt to be tomorrow. Changes in curriculum, in teaching methods and in attitudes toward youth are essential. Guidance counselling programs in the schools must be strengthened to provide early detection and treatment of difficulties. Greater attention needs to be given to facilitating the re-entry of those who have dropped out of school; at present this process is fraught with obstacles. Innovative programs are required which enable young people to work in paid employment while continuing their education.
7. Federal-provincial support should be available to summer programs of voluntary youth service such as those operated by various church groups.
8. Federal and provincial governments should give leadership in creating summer job opportunities for those students who need to earn money to continue their education.
9. Professional help for problems in family relationships should be readily accessible to families at all income levels.
10. Group homes and other residential facilities are urgently needed for those adolescents whose continued living at home is either impossible or undesirable because of severe family problems. Such homes should receive public financial support.

Interviews with community agencies working with transient youth revealed that many of the young people on the road during the summer planned to return home at the end of the summer. They were motivated to travel by a wish to see and know Canada. We believe that this phenomenon will continue and indeed should be encouraged. In addition, there is a steady movement of young people from rural areas and less populated centres into the cities in search of employment. The recommendations which follow are designed to meet the needs of both groups of youth.

11. We urge the establishment of a network of hostels throughout the country which would provide safe, clean, inexpensive accommodation. Hostels could be youth-operated but need not be established as separate agencies. National organizations such as the "Y" might be approached to take on the responsibility of including this service in their programs. Hostels should be eligible for federal subsidies which could be channelled through one or more national organizations.

12. First-aid and emergency health care should be available and readily accessible.

13. The experience of different communities in providing communal feeding arrangements should be thoroughly assessed with a view to developing sound proposals for ensuring adequate nutrition for youthful transients.

14. We urge greater support to drop-in centres. Not only have they proved to be popular meeting places for youth but they also play a key role in providing information and referral on a whole range of services, one or more of which the young traveller may require during his stay in the community. We believe the drop-in centres should be youth-operated but should not necessarily be established as separate agencies.

Drop-in centres require adequate and consistent financing and should receive financial support from the senior levels of government. Counselling is available in many centres and should be strengthened. Since staffing is crucial to the effectiveness of the service provided by the drop-in centre, staff members should be carefully selected and should be provided with back-up support from professionals. We urge the development of criteria for staff selection and for evaluating and reporting on the programs of drop-in centres. Provision of public funds should be conditional on regular evaluation of programs by an independent source.

15. Boarding houses, cooperative apartments and group homes should be established in cities which serve as "receiving centres" for young people in search of employment or on their first job. These facilities should receive public subsidy to enable the individual to pay according to his means. Improved liaison with manpower services needs to be developed on behalf of these youth, and other community agencies are urged to become more alert to their needs.

16. A network of crisis-oriented travellers' aid services should be established in the major cities in readily accessible locations clearly visible and open for service day and night. They should be staffed by professional caseworkers with good diagnostic skills. Such services need not entail the creation of separate agencies but could be departments of existing agencies, provided they met required standards and were willing to participate in a chain of such services. This service should be available to all age groups.

17. Professional education and training programs for those intending to work with youth should be thoroughly examined and modified to ensure their relevancy to the current needs of youth.

Among the group of young travellers are an undetermined number who do not return to home or school or become settled in employment at the end of the summer. They continue to wander. Indeed their motivation for travel is quite different. Travel may represent an attempt to escape from the problems within themselves and may be symptomatic of serious psychological problems.. For some, wandering may be quite self-destructive. Among these youth are the severely disturbed, including the drug-dependent. Programs or practices which encourage or pressure these damaged young people to move on to another community are only shifting the problem to the next community and may well contribute to the further deterioration of the individual young person. For the severely troubled youth we urge a variety of special programs, facilities and services designed not only to meet their immediate needs but also to assist them as far as possible to lead satisfying lives.

18. Emergency hospital facilities are essential where the disturbed and often disturbing youth will be received and treated with the same compassion extended to other patients, whether the youth has hepatitis, a venereal disease or is high on drugs. We urge that social workers be assigned to emergency wards on a 24-hour basis.

19. Emergency psychiatric treatment facilities are urgently needed. The conditions for effective participation by volunteers in the provision of these services should be carefully assessed and encouraged.

20. We urge that residential treatment centres and group homes be established for those who need extended care. Special facilities will be required for drug-dependent youth.

21. Manpower services and education and training institutions should collaborate with treatment centres to assist the individual youth back into the mainstream of society.

22. Provincial governments are urged to review their public assistance policies and practices for youth and to give leadership to municipalities in ensuring that there is fair and reasonable access to assistance for youth who are in need. Every applicant should be advised of the right of appeal in the event that he is refused assistance.

23. Child welfare authorities should critically re-assess current policies and procedures on the return of children and youth to their province of residence. Follow-up on the outcome of repatriation of runaways is urgently needed.

24. Traditional social agencies such as family service agencies are urged to develop experimental and innovative programs for reaching and helping the disturbed youth in their communities.

25. Local communities are urged to recognize the vital importance of a strong youth division within the police department and to support the recruitment of suitably qualified personnel for such work. Youth squad personnel should be encouraged to participate in community planning for youth.

26. We urge the federal government to undertake research on the effects of drug use, to disseminate the findings and to revise legislation where this is indicated. We also urge the government to establish a communications network for the purpose of rapid and accurate transmission of information on drugs and methods of treatment. We recommend that a small working conference be convened by the Department of National Health and Welfare to establish guidelines for public education about drug use.

APPENDIX F

LOANS TO YM-YWCA, 1966-1970

DATE	PROPOSER	LOCATION	NO. OF HOSTEL BEDS	LOAN	LOAN AS % OF TOTAL COST OF PROJECT
August 1966	YWCA	QUEBEC	112	350,000	N.A.
January 1967	YWCA	WINNIPEG	112*** 37 *	783,000	N.A.
January 1967	YWCA	HAMILTON	105 18 *	500,000	19%
November 1967	YWCA	VANCOUVER	140	980,000	48%
April 1968	YM-YWCA	OTTAWA	215*** 96*	1,505,000	25%
June 1970	YWCA	CALGARY	102*** 40*	500,000	15%

*** permanent hostel

* Overnight hostel

Present CMHC policy is that funds will not be provided for hostel beds to be used for overnight accommodation for transients.

APPENDIX C

LOANS FOR HALFWAY HOUSES 1966-1970

DATE	PROPONENT	LOCATION	NO. OF HOSTEL BEDS	LOAN	LOAN AS A % OF TOTAL COST OF PROJECT
December 1966	Cariboo Homes for Unwed Mothers	KAMLOOPS	not given	46,000	51%
January 1968	Elizabeth Fry Society	VANCOUVER	5	15,300	57%
September 1968	Western Ont. Mennonite Conference	LONDON, Ont.	10	23,000	75%
November 1968	Elizabeth Fry Society	NORTH BURNABY	5	21,300	57%
March 1969	Victoria Hostel for Girls	VICTORIA	14	32,850	89%
May 1969	Elizabeth Fry Society	TORONTO	15	105,000	34%
August 1969	Kiwanis Home for Girls	PRINCE ALBERT	8	14,184	72%
December 1969	Elizabeth Fry Society	VANCOUVER	7	23,300	56%
June 1970	Powell River & District Youth Assoc.	POWELL RIVER, B.C.	10	31,000	57%

EXAMPLE OF PROPOSAL FOR TRANSIENT
HOUSING

BRIEF PROPOSAL FOR A NEW HOSTEL

During the summer of 1970, a major effort was made here in Toronto to provide emergency housing for "crashers" - young adults, usually alone but sometimes in couples and occasionally with one or more children. The crashers arrived in Toronto with little or no money. Sometimes they were en route; for others, Toronto was their destination. Whether from the United States or from other countries, or from other parts of Canada, they came to Toronto for what was in their minds an extended vist.

Housing was provided ruing the summer for a total of 128 crashers. We know that there were many people sleeping in Queens' Park on warm summer nights. We know also that others were placed in various private homes; that the Toronto Free Youth Clinic usually had 3 to 5 persons; that still others found places at Scott Mission, Fred Victor Mission, Good Shepherd, and other established hostel-type operations.

Probably as many as 500 people were housed in this ad hoc fashion on any given night during the summer. On peaks week-ends and for special events, the figure surely went higher, perhaps to 1,000.

Now the cold weather has arrived, and many of the "crashers" have returned to school. But the problem persists. The Y has cut back to 60 beds; St. Basil's has stopped operations. The girls' Y continues. But the need also continues.

We at the Hall find that we have had from 3 to 7 "crashers" every night. And every night the problem of placing them becomes more difficult. Those we find accommodations for, take the accommodations; the next day, more arrive.

It is our judgement that another hostel-facility for "crashers" to be operated at a minimum budget but at no charge to the crashers, is desperately needed in Metro Toronto. The pages which follow detail our proposed hostel.

The Hall, as many of you know, is a small building at 19 Huron Street which contains an auditorium with stage on its upper floor; and a lounge, kitchen, and small offices, plus rest-room and furnace room, on its lower floor. It used to be the Finnish Social Club.

Late this summer, five individuals, all of whom consider themselves part of what has been called the counter-culture, or "street" culture, in Toronto, signed a lease with Canada Trust for the use of the building as a recreational facility. The hope of the signers, and of the other individuals who have associated themselves with the hall, is to make it the community hall for the entire counter-culture.

We see it as a basic function of that culture to care for its own; to make the effort to provide housing for the "crashers".

On this account, we have established a fund of \$1,000, which is immediately available; and have the promise of an additional \$600/month for the next three months. This money would be used to rent and operate a crash-pad for young adult transients (single males and a few couples). Final responsibility for the operation of the crash-pad would lie with members of the Hall family. We very much hope that all the helping agencies in Metro Toronto would feel that they have a part to play in supporting and making use of the house.

We see the house as a "primary-contact" social service agency, providing initial counselling and referral service for its clients, in addition to offering them a bed for the night and a friendly face and a cup of coffee. But to perform this task effectively, we would need to establish and maintain working relationships with all other helping agencies, so that any individual coming through the agency would move easily and naturally from there to one of the daytime service agencies, for counselling on immigration, employment, education, etc.

We propose to obtain a house in the central district. We propose to staff the house with three individuals, carefully chosen, who would live in the hostel and be responsible for all matters pertaining to its operation. They would do initial intake, see to the maintenance of heat, hydro, phone, etc. as well as janitorial services, and provide contact for the crashers with other social agencies. Salaries would be \$25-30/week.

We propose that the hostel would receive crashers on an open-door, first-come first-served basis until 10:00 p.m.; after that, by referral from the Hall or the Y or some other agency. Everyone would have a bed, with fresh linens, blanket and pillow. Coffee would be served in the morning; crashers would be responsible for the cleanliness of their rooms; linens would be taken to the basement for laundering. A living room area would be available; all bedrooms would be vacated by 10:00 a.m. Coffee would be available, but no other food.

A time-limit of seven days would be set on residence, to be extended at the discretion of the hostel staff in the case of an individual whose situation required more time for counselling and placement.

Equipment needed would include:

- mattresses, blankets, pillows
- linens, (sheets, pillow cases, towels)
- a washer-dryer combination
- a coffee-urn

We would hope to have the support of other agencies in terms of providing some or all of these necessary materials.

Money has been provided. Staff is being selected this week. A house is needed, material is needed. Otherwise, we are ready to go.

Respectfully,

The Hall family,
19 Huron Street
863-0275

19 October 1970

EDITORIAL FROM THE CALGARY HERALD - October 2, 1970

Don't Coddle Them

The Calgary Planning Commission acted wisely in vetoing the establishment of a youth aid centre in the Victoria Park area.

The commission's action was obviously influenced by petitions and letters opposing the centre. And there can be no doubt that this opposition was justified. Citizens of the area demonstrated a legitimate concern over the effect the centre would have in an area which is already attempting to cope with numerous social problems.

Admittedly, the increasing numbers of vagrant youth in the nation's cities do constitute a problem. But it will become an even bigger one unless governments, and well-meaning agencies and individuals, don't start viewing the situation in its proper perspective.

There must be recognition of the fact that provision of free flophouse accommodation for young transients is self-defeating. It merely encourages more indolent young people in the belief that they have a right to live like parasites off other members of society.

This arrogant attitude is reflected in the fact that several young people have already taken over the Victoria Park premises, despite the fact that they had no authority to do so.

There has been far too much bleating and hand-wringing about the alleged plight of young people who take to the road. The plight is one of their own making. They don't need to hit the highway. They don't need to end up in a strange city, without a penny, seeking a roof over their heads and a free meal. In fact, it is irresponsible for them to do so. But it is just as irresponsible to encourage their actions by offering to look after their basic needs.

It is wrong to attempt to dignify these youth aid centres by equating them with the European youth hostel system. In Europe, the hostels serve the needs of legitimate travellers — young people who, although wishing to travel modestly, have no wish to sponge off somebody else.

But in Canada, it is clear that the type of hostel accommodation which has been provided over recent months exists primarily to satisfy the demands of spongers and free-loaders. Why should they be singled out for special privileges? Why should they be coddled? Why take actions which merely give further encouragement to the young derelict?

Instead of adding to the problem of transient youth, by inviting more of them to take to the roads, governments should be pondering ways of reducing this problem. One effective solution would be for the provinces to contemplate means of discouraging hitch-hikers during the summer months.